

CABINET

Exceptional Events 2012 (2012 Festivals and Events Update) 17 January 2012 Report of Head of Community Engagement

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To update members and seek approval for plans and resources for events to celebrate and maximise the economic impact of the Olympics				
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member
Date Included in Forward Plan		December 2011		
This report is public				

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Cabinet considers the options for celebrating the Olympics as part of the 2012/13 festival programme, as set out in the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The council has a tradition of supporting festivals and events which directly support two council priorities:

- Economic Regeneration – Visitor Economy
- Partnership Working and Community Leadership

- 1.2 Festivals and events have a direct impact, attracting more visitors to a destination, raising the profile of a place, creating a sense of wellbeing, providing a platform to raise awareness and communicate positive messages, and can help attract residents and investment.

- 1.3 The 2011/12 festivals and events budget has been £46,900 (net) and has been used to support the following events. Cabinet recently approved the budget for the same events in 2012/13 (min No. 47 04/10/2011 refers):

- 2011 Sandcastle Festival
- 2011 Seaside Festival
- 2011 Fireworks Spectacular
- 2011 Summer Concert Series of Bands in the Park (Happy Mount Park)
- £2,000 towards More Music for the Catch the Wind Kite Festival.

- 1.4 According to independent evaluation the economic impact of the Sandcastle Festival in 2011 was estimated as £436,233.60.

The 2011 Seaside Festival evaluation found 44.8% of attendees were visitors to Morecambe. Independently estimated economic impact, based on an extremely conservative visitor number figure is £936,960.

- 1.5 In terms of destination profile raising, the events attracted enormous amounts of coverage.

- 1.6 2012 will be a significant year for the district in terms of high profile events. In addition to the growing success of the council's now mainstream events it is also host to up to three major opportunities for the district from a visitor economy and community involvement perspective:

- The Olympics and
- Lancashire Witches 400
- the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

- 1.8 This will lead in to 2013 when the district will host the International Youth Games.

2.0 Olympics

- 2.1 In July 2011 the Cabinet portfolio holder received and approved a report to accept an offer from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) in respect of next year's Cultural Olympiad celebrations. The London 2012 Cultural Olympiad is the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic movements.

- 2.2 The 'outdoor and events' strand of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad features a wide range of projects and activities, the highlight of which will be the Olympic Torch Relay. The cities and towns selected at 'overnight stops' on the route have been announced. The two nearest stopping off points are Bowness on Windermere and Blackpool.

- 2.3 On the 21 June 2011, at Northwest regional event, hosted by LOCOG, we were advised that this district had been selected as part of the route for the Olympic Torch, although that official announcement took place early November.

- 2.4 On Friday, 22 June 2012 – the Flame will spend four hours in the district, passing through Bolton le Sands, Hest Bank, Morecambe and Lancaster – all in running mode, leaving the district to travel to Blackpool. A number of iconic stopping points have been identified to act as backdrops to the Flame en-route. The visit to our district marks the exact half way point in the flame's journey.

- 2.5 The council was required to and subsequently formally agreed to this proposal and signed a legal agreement to that effect. The Agreement sets out the roles and responsibilities of each party.

- 2.6 In the report to Cabinet in July it was also made clear there would be additional demand placed upon staff in responding to this:

2.7 Officers have necessarily begun planning for the torch event and associated considerations, which include public safety, risk assessments, stewarding, signage, any promotional materials (in line with LOCOG rules), any permits, road closures etc, co-ordinating a multi agency co-ordinated approach, including community involvement along the route. This forms a number of strands:

2.8 Multi agency approach

We have linked with Wyre District Council, South Lakeland District Council, Lancashire County Council and emergency services to develop a co-ordinated approach to the operational requirements of the route.

Internally the Assistant Heads of Communications and Wellbeing and Civil Contingencies officer will co-ordinate our approach. This will comprise groups of officers from both parts of the service working:

- a) with community groups, voluntary sector, sports clubs, schools, higher education sector and arts organisations to engage them in the participatory elements throughout the entire route;
- b) marketing and communication – to ensure the local community is engaged and informed and tourism opportunities are maximised.

2.9 23 and 24 June

From the perspective of attracting and retaining visitors to the district, promoting the district's natural and physical sporting assets, capitalising on the sense of community and pride and the promotion of health and wellbeing that this once in a lifetime event provides, officers advise that an additional sports related festival flow on over the weekend of 23 and 24 June, linking the entire district. The outdoor sports market is a growing visitor market the district can capitalise on. The success of the Way of the Roses National Coast to Coast Cycle trail has already attracted hundreds of new tourists to the district. This weekend sports showcase will focus on highlighting the sporting assets the district has to offer tourists including cycling, water and beach sports, providing opportunities to 'have a go' and promoting health and wellbeing. Fun sporting related attractions for all groups and showcasing local talent that are inclusive to all will be key. It's anticipated this event would become an annual attraction, leaving a legacy from the Olympics that encourages sport, wellbeing, inclusivity and the district as an outdoor adventure tourism attractions. It would also provide a launch platform for the 2013 International Youth Games which the district is hosting.

3.0. Resources

3.1 As part of the July Individual Cabinet Member Decision report it was made clear there would be financial implications attached to the hosting of the Olympic event.

3.2 Resources are thin. Across all council events and tourism marketing activity there are just three dedicated full time officers. Resources from across wellbeing and communications are being re-directed in order to fulfil the Olympic requirements set out above but overall there will be some additional resource required.

3.3 To support the overall events delivery of this exceptional event it is recommended that Cabinet approve additional funding of:

- Up to £50,000 for the Olympic Torch event, Sports Extravaganza Festival weekend and officer support. This can be broken down as:
 - up to £30,000 for the torch event to cover operational costs such as barriers, PA systems, road signage, security, stewards, attractions and dressing of key aspects of the route
 - Up to a further £10,000 would be required to host the weekend tourist focussed event
 - up to £10,000 funding to support an assistant to work alongside the events officer in the organisation and delivery of this exceptional year of events. (Before 2010 the council had three full time events officers. There is now just one who is extremely stretched to deliver at current capacities).
 - It is suggested that this assistant post would provide an ideal opportunity to create an apprenticeship post (12 months) within Festival and Events team, subject to the growth bid being approved. The council's apprenticeship plans are ambitious and the creation of a post of this nature is seen as an excellent opportunity for a local person to be able to develop knowledge and skills within a particular discipline attracting world wide interest, whilst making a significant contribution to the Cultural Olympiad within the region. This is preferred by Officers and it would reduce the specific funding need for the Olympics to £40K, but clearly it is dependent upon the Apprenticeship growth bid being taken forward and approved.
 - Alternatively it may be possible to examine existing capacity within the establishment across all services and consider the secondment of a member of staff from another service unit into this role. Again, this would reduce the specific growth need down to £40K.

4.0 Details of Consultation

4.1 Previous consultation with businesses, festival-goers, feedback generally and liaison with partners regarding the impact of events and marketing

5.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

Options

As agreed in July, set out below are a range of options and costs to Cabinet for initial consideration regarding the Olympic Torch celebrations.

<p>Option 1: Notes the update, determines whether £40K or £50K is to be recommended, and seeks Council approval at the beginning of February,</p>	<p>Option 2: Notes the update, determines whether £40K or £50K growth be proposed, but does not agree to seek early budget update and</p>	<p>Option 3: Notes the update and decides to provide some funding to cover the necessary health and safety costs associated with the torch passing through the district</p>
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<p>to allow earlier progress towards festivals and events for 2012 and 2013 – as set out in paragraph 3.3. above.</p>	<p>delays any decision until budget council at the end of February 2012.</p>	
Advantages		
<p>It will encourage visitors to the district at the time – supporting the regeneration priority. Unprecedented local, regional, national and international coverage of the district – raising the profile of Lancaster and Morecambe long term as an attractive place to visit/stay, supporting the regeneration of the district. It will help potential visitors to geographically locate Lancaster/Morecambe as a visitor destination close to the Lake District, It will demonstrate to other potential event organisers that this district is able to successfully host international scale events. This again supports the regeneration priority. It will be an enormous opportunity for the community to come together and enjoy a once in a lifetime experience. It will also help to enhance the community's sense of pride in the district. It will raise the profile of sport amongst local people and provide a springboard to encourage regular exercise and sporting opportunities. Creates certainty and planning time for businesses who will benefit from the events Supports the council's priorities and a significant element of the council's Visitor Marketing Plan</p>	<p>Council is able to make any decision within the overall context of setting its budget for 2012/13</p>	<p>Allows the Torch to pass through the district safely.</p>
Disadvantages		
<p>Decision taken ahead of wider</p>	<p>Risks failure to adequately</p>	<p>.</p>

<p>budget setting context</p> <p>Resource implications - people and financial.</p> <p>Failure to realise the massive benefits this event might bring.</p>	<p>plan and deliver the event.</p> <p>Does not leave enough time to plan and implement and take maximum advantage of opportunities</p>	
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6.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

6.1 Option 1

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Cabinet needs to take a decision with regard to the Council's commitment to this exceptional event in 2012. The earlier a decision can be made the more this will assist in planning for the event.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Corporate Plan priorities -

- Economic Regeneration – Visitor Economy
- Partnership Working and Community Leadership

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None - all events run directly by or supported by the Council will be in accordance with its policies in respect of Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As part of the individual cabinet member report of July 2011 accepting the offer from LOCOG in respect of next year's Cultural Olympiad celebrations it was acknowledged that there would be financial implications attached to the hosting of the event, dependant upon the scale of activities to be held. The officer preferred option of this report is that up to an additional £50,000 is provided towards the events management, marketing and delivery of this one off opportunity, although this could be reduced to £40K depending on how officer support is to be provided. Providing the necessary number of stewards for the Olympic Torch event may also have a staffing implication on other council services on 22 June.

If Option 1 is preferred it would therefore result in a one-off budget increase in 2012/13 of either £40,000 or £50,000 and this would involve a referral for final decision by Council on 01

February.

However if Option 2 is agreed then the decision could be deferred until Budget Council in March 2012 and could be assessed alongside other priorities.

Option 3 would result in lower costs – as yet to be determined. Clearly there would be no requirement to seek an early decision from Council. Therefore the cost estimates would be reported into February Cabinet, for incorporation into Cabinet's final budget proposals.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

Should the proposal to introduce an Apprenticeship posts to support the Festival and Events activities be approved the Council will seek to appoint a person to the post via the framework which has been developed for the recruitment to all apprenticeship posts. This framework ensures that all development opportunities are targeted at local people via one of four potential routes.

Information Services:

None

Property:

None

Open Spaces:

The district's parks, open spaces and beaches form the backdrop to these festivals and events

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted. The reason for seeking an early final decision on the budget allocation is set out in the report. If Cabinet is minded to support this option, then it should ensure that the proposal represents a suitably high priority, when compared with other spending needs and priorities.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

. The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

21 July 2011- Individual Cabinet Member Decision

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